



THE UNIVERSITY OF
CHICAGO

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

DEFINING PROBLEMS. SHAPING SOLUTIONS.

Updates from the California Youth Transitions to Adulthood Study (CaIYOUTH): Implications for Policy and Practice

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CalYOUTH Study Funders and Partners

- **Support** the research
- **Provide** guidance and feedback
- **Host** CalYOUTH Study section with results on **website (co-invest.org—Resources)**
- **Promote** via presentations and media outreach

California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership

California Department of Social Services

County Welfare Directors Association of California

The Judicial Council of California

Casey Family Programs

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation*

Stuart Foundation*

Walter S. Johnson Foundation*

Zellerbach Family Foundation*

**CalYOUTH funders. Annie E. Casey and William T Grant Foundations are funders, not in Co-investment Partnership.*

Overview of the CalYOUTH Study

Evaluation of the impact of California Fostering Connections to Success Act (AB 12) on outcomes for foster youth

CalYOUTH Study includes:

- Longitudinal study of young people in CA foster care making the transition to adulthood
- Periodic surveys of caseworkers serving young people in CA foster care
- Analysis of government program administrative data

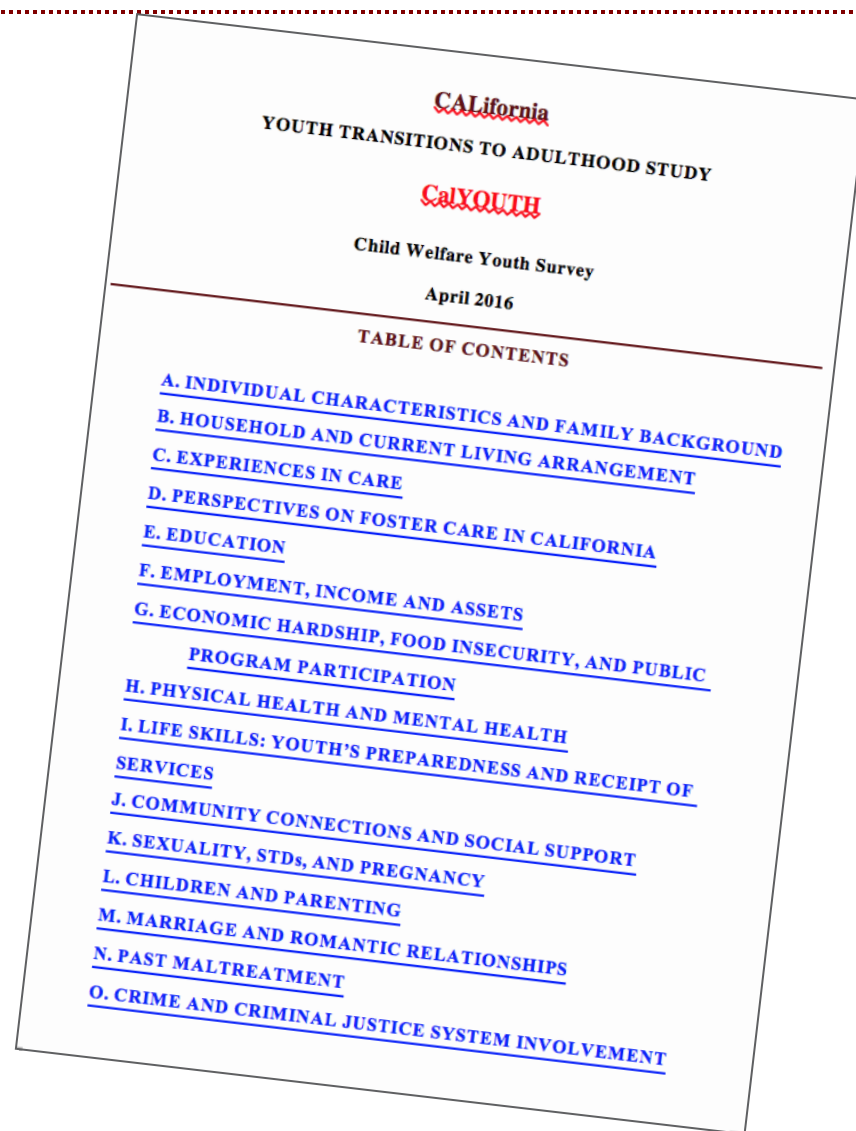
Evaluation Questions

- *What influence, if any, does the extension of foster care past age 18 have on youths' well-being during their transition to adulthood from foster care (e.g., legal and relational permanency, education, employment, housing stability, family formation, economic well-being, social support, physical and mental health, psychological well-being, and crime)?*
- *In the context of California's policy of extended foster care, what factors influence the kinds of transition supports foster youths receive during the transition to adulthood?*
- *How do the distinct types of living arrangements and other services youth have access to as a result of extended care mediate the relationship between extending care and youth outcomes?*

Purpose of the Longitudinal Youth Study

Obtain information about a broad range of life experiences & young adult outcomes

- Foster care placement
- Service utilization & preparation
- Perceptions of extended care
- Education and employment
- Health and development
- Social support
- Delinquency
- Pregnancy and children



The image shows the cover and table of contents of a report titled "CALifornia YOUTH TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD STUDY". The cover also includes the subtitle "Child Welfare Youth Survey" and the date "April 2016". The table of contents lists 15 sections, each underlined in blue.

| |
|--|
| CALifornia |
| YOUTH TRANSITIONS TO ADULTHOOD STUDY |
| CalYOUTH |
| Child Welfare Youth Survey |
| April 2016 |
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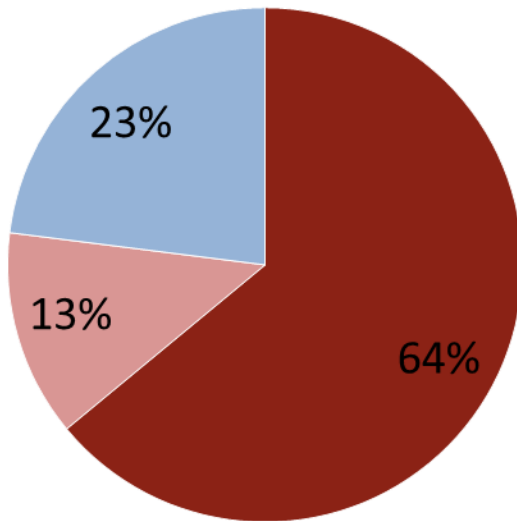
Youth Surveys:

Data Collection and Response Rate

- **Wave 1 Survey Period (age 17)**
 - April 2013 to October 2013
 - 51 counties included in final sample (weighted sampling)
 - Youth eligible for study $n = 763$
 - Completed interviews $n = 727$ (response rate = 95.3%)
- **Wave 2 Survey Period (age 19)**
 - March 2015 to December 2015
 - Youth eligible for study $n = 724$
 - Completed interviews $n = 611$ (response rate = 84.1%)
- **Wave 3 Survey Period (age 21)**
 - March 2017 to December 2017
 - Youth eligible for study $n = 724$
 - Completed interviews $n = 593$ (response rate = 81.9%)

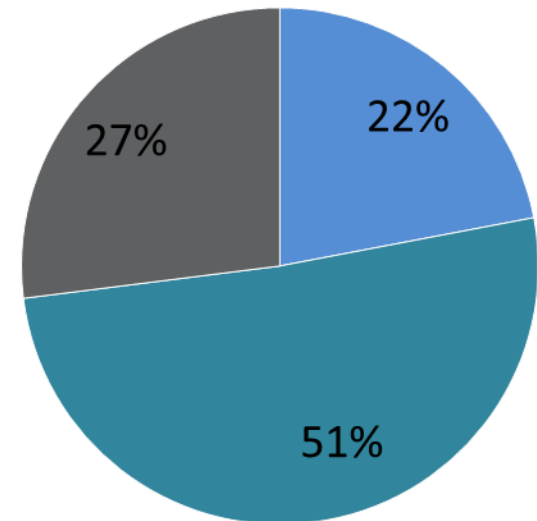
Current Foster Care Status at Age 19

Care Status at Wave 2
($n=611$)



- In care (never left since Wave 1)
- In care (exited and reentered after Wave 1)
- Not in care

Age at Discharge
($n=134$)



- 17 or younger
- 18
- 19

Purpose Today

- Share information on living arrangements and social support in the era of extended foster care
- Explore the influence of extended foster care on early outcomes

Disclaimer: The findings reported herein were performed with the permission of the California Department of Social Services. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the authors and should not be considered as representing the policy of the collaborating agency or any agency of the California government.



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Living Arrangements and Social Support in the Era of Extended Foster Care

Chapin Hall

at the University of Chicago

Policy research that benefits children, families, and their communities

Background

- Social support is important buffer from the occurrence and impact of negative life events, and it can enhance resiliency¹
- Connections to relatives, peers, professionals, and foster families found to be important for youth as they transition out of care²
- Common placement options for foster youth under age 18:³
 - Non-relatives, relatives, and congregate care
- New placement options for foster youth over age 18:⁴
 - Supervised Independent Living Placements (SILPs) and Transitional Housing Placements (THPs)

¹ Collins, Spencer, & Ward, 2010; Stein, 2008; Van Breda & Dickens, 2015

² Wade, 2008; Stein, 2012

³ Courtney, Terao, & Bost, 2004; Eastman et al., 2016

⁴ Courtney et al., 2005; Courtney et al., 2016; McCoy, McMillen, & Spitznagel, 2007

Present Analysis

OBJECTIVES

- Describe living arrangements, types of social support, and sources of social support among foster youth, both at age 17 and at age 19.
- Among youth still in care at age 19, investigate whether types and sources of social support differ by their living arrangements.
- Investigate whether types and sources of social support differ between youth who have remained in care and youth who have exited care.

Present Analysis

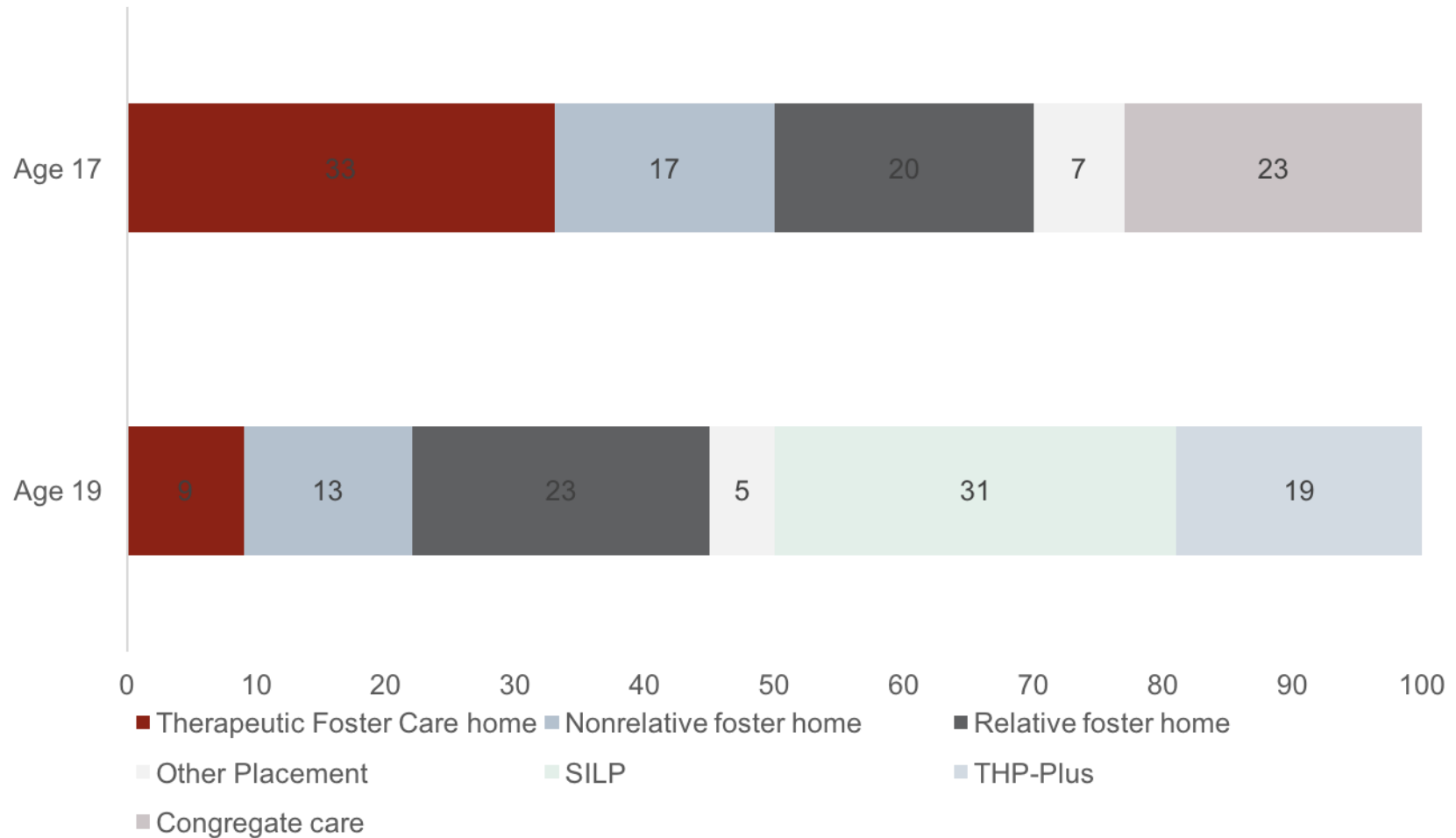
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SAMPLE AND ANALYSES

- Sample includes 611 youths who completed both Wave 1 and Wave 2 interviews
- Data from youth surveys and administrative data on placement type

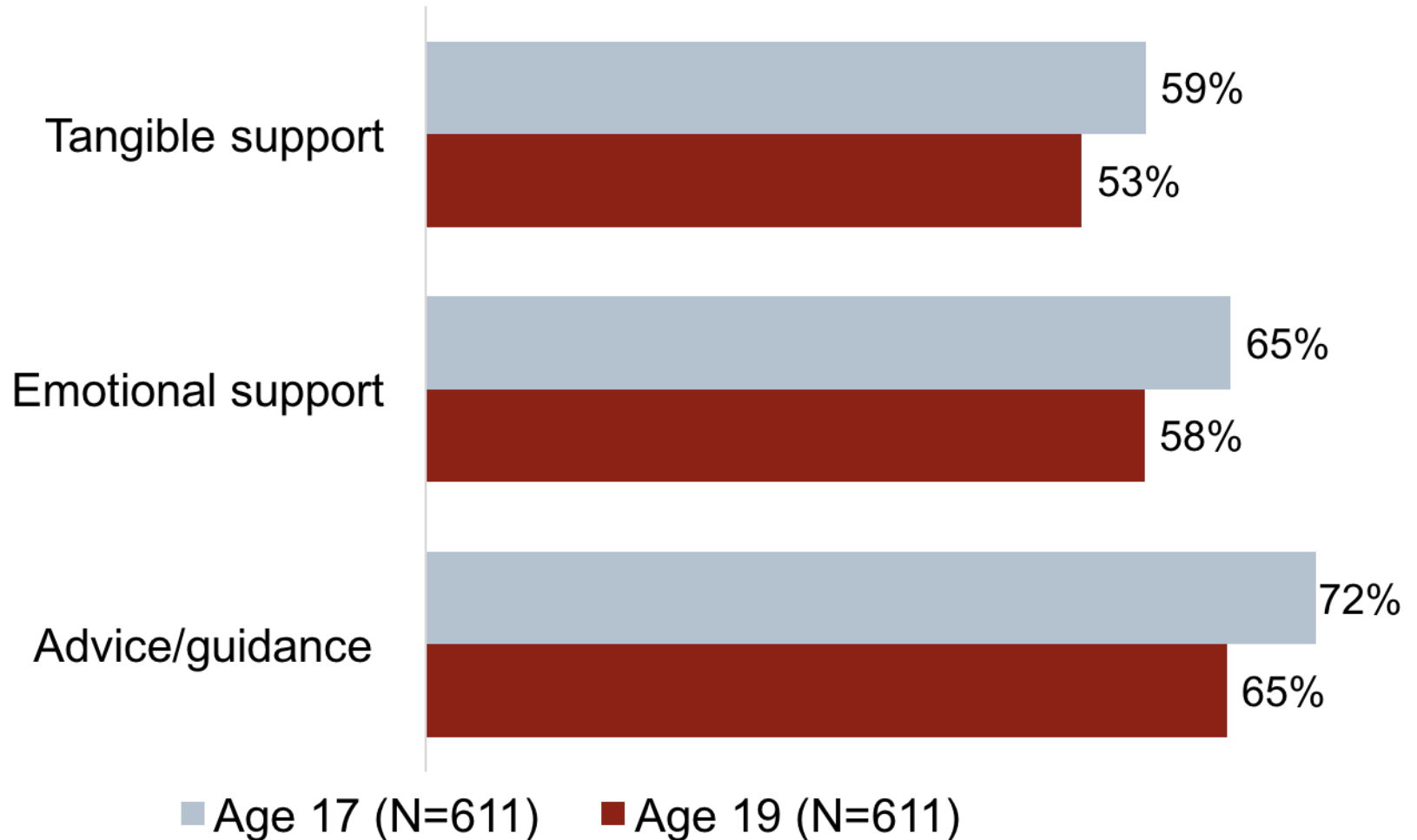
Living Arrangements at Ages 17¹ and Age 19²



¹ n=587, includes only youths in care at Wave 1

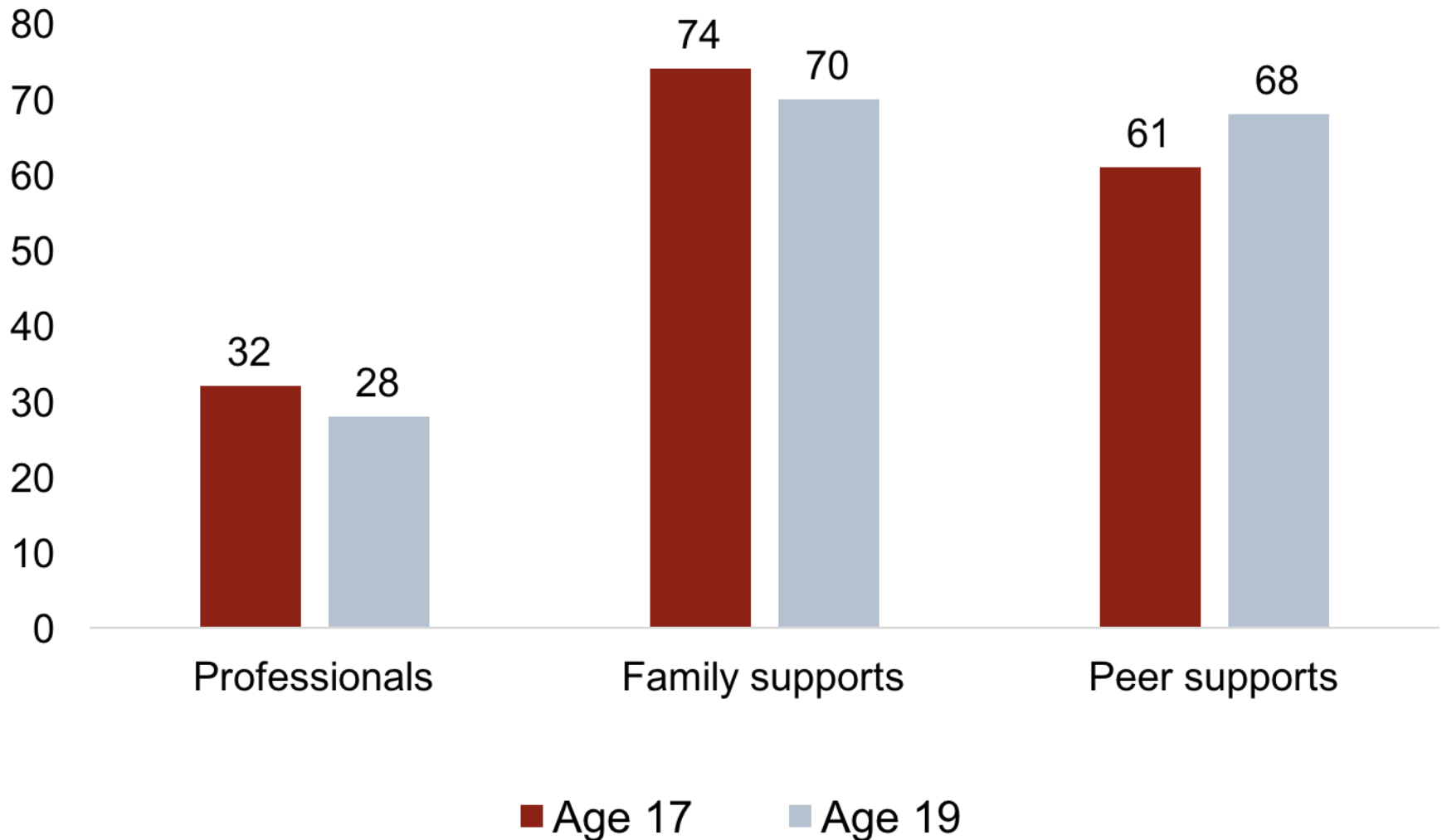
² n=477, includes only youths in care at Wave 2

Youths' Perceived Adequacy of Types of Social Support

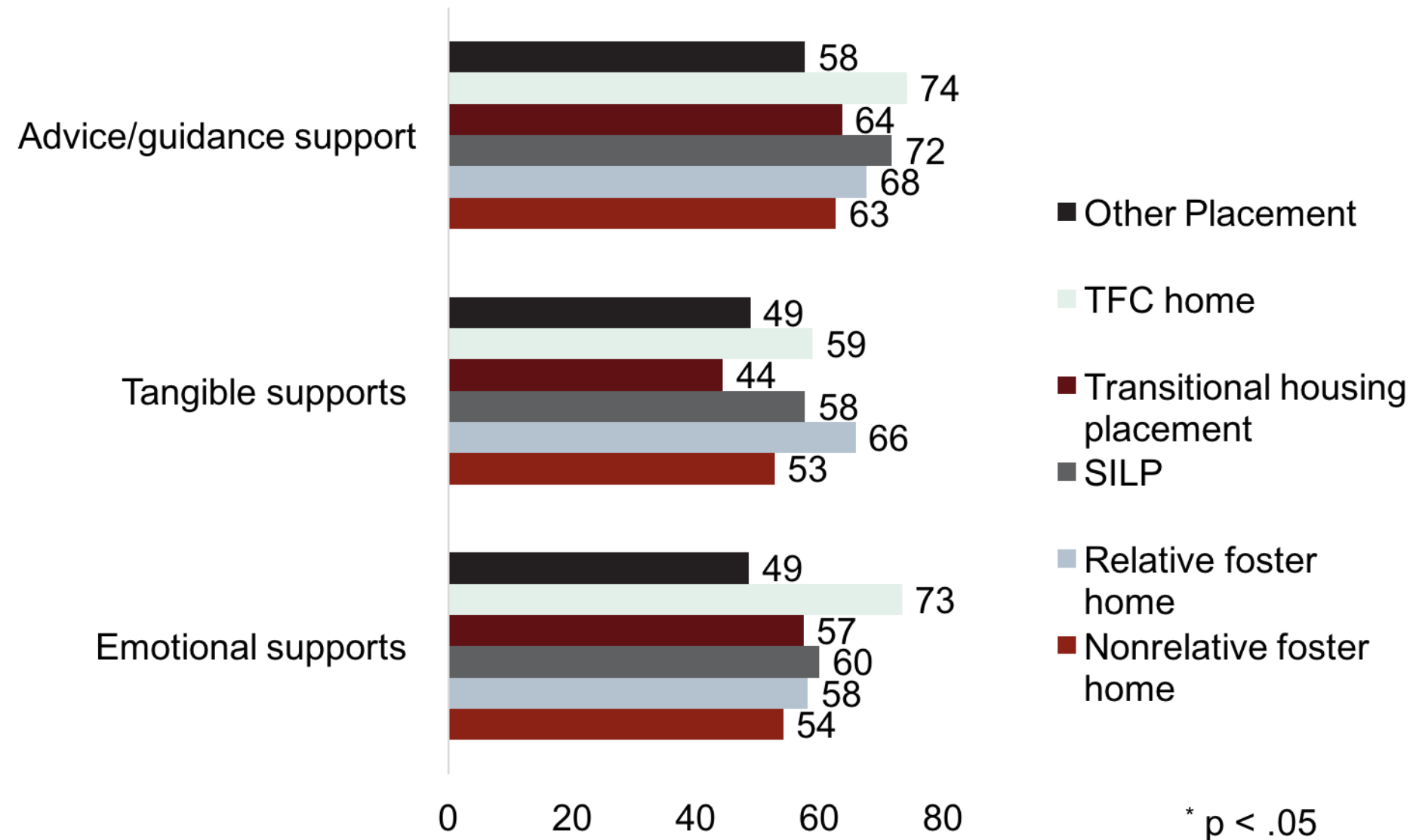


Sources of Social Support

(nominated at least one individual, N=611)



Youths' Perceived Adequacy of Types of Social Support by Placement Type at Age 19 (n=477,%)



Comparisons of Social Support by Care Status at Age 19 (n=611)

| | Overall I (%) | In Care (%) | Out of Care (%) | <i>p</i> |
|--|------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Adequacy of Types of Social Support (%) | | | | |
| Emotional support | 58.4 | 59.2 | 55.5 | n.s. |
| Tangible support | 53.3 | 56.0 | 44.3 | .011. |
| Advice/guidance support | 65.1 | 67.4 | 57.2 | .013 |
| Sources of Social Support (nominated at least one individual) | | | | |
| Professional | 28.4 | 34.4 | 7.9 | <.001 |
| Family supports | 69.8 | 69.3 | 71.6 | n.s. |
| Peer supports | 68.3 | 68.9 | 66.0 | n.s. |

Limitations

- Generalizability to other states
- Attrition over time
- Measures of social support
- Unable to make comparison to general youth population
- Casual mechanisms remain unclear

Summary

- Many youth have ongoing contact with their family
- Youth residing with families have less connection to professionals
- One-third to two-fifths of youth report having inadequate support at age 19 in one or more of the domains
- Youth remaining in care more likely than those who exited to report adequate tangible support, advice/guidance, and support from professionals

Implications

- Efforts are needed to ensure that youth have enough adults they can rely on as they transition to adulthood, regardless of their living arrangements
- Remaining in care may connect youth to important sources of support. Efforts to make such connections for youth who leave care warrant investigation
- Policies and practices that promote the formation of natural mentors and peer mentors are promising



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Influence of Extended Foster Care on Early Outcomes

Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

Policy research that benefits children, families, and their communities

Background

- Research following foster youth into adulthood has shown that they generally fare much worse than their same age peers in a number of outcomes¹
- Midwest Study has helped identify potential benefits of allowing youth to remain in care past their 18th birthday²
- More states adopting extended foster care (EFC)

¹ Courtney, 2009.

² Courtney & Hook, 2017; Hook & Courtney, 2011; Dworsky & Courtney, 2010; Dworsky, Napolitano, & Courtney, 2013; Lee, Courtney, & Hook, 2012; Lee, Courtney, & Tajima, 2014; Hook & Courtney, 2013.

Present Analysis

- **Research Question**

- Does allowing youth to remain in foster care past their 18th birthday improve outcomes?

- **Objective**

- Assess the relationship between how long youth remained in care past their 18th birthday and selected outcomes measured at Wave 2 interviews (age 19).

Regression Analysis

- **Ordinary least squares**
 - Continuous outcome measures
- **Binary logistic regression**
 - Dichotomous outcomes
- **Poisson regression**
 - Count outcomes
- **Ordinal logistic regression**
 - Health status outcome

Variables

- **Primary Predictor Variable**
 - Number of months in care after 18th birthday
- **Outcome Variables**
 - Education, employment, experience of economic hardships, physical health, behavioral health, parenting, and criminal involvement.
- **Control Variables**
 - Baseline risk and protective factors including: demographic characteristics, aspects of youths' foster care histories, academic performance, educational attainment, support, health, parenting, and criminal involvement.

Descriptive Statistics

| Outcome | % or M(SD) |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Secondary education | 67.8% |
| Postsecondary education | 49.7% |
| Employment | 31.2% |
| Income | \$3,455 (\$6,621) |
| Assets | \$885 (\$2,438) |
| Economic hardship | 1.2 (1.5) |
| Food insecurity | 29.3% |
| Homelessness | 32.0% |
| Receipt of need-based public aid | \$190 (\$635) |
| General health | |
| Poor/fair to good | 45.3% |
| Very good to excellent | 54.7% |

| Outcome | % or M(SD) |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Mental health disorder | 26.9% |
| Substance use disorder | 14.1% |
| Social support | 3.2 (1.4) |
| Pregnancy | 25.9% |
| Parental status | 15.5% |
| Criminal justice system involvement | |
| Arrested | 14.5% |
| Convicted of a crime | 8.3% |
| Victimization | |
| Physically assaulted | 4.1% |
| Weapon pulled or used | 11.3% |

Regression Analysis

| Outcome | n | Type | Outcome Unit | Change in outcome from an additional year in care | |
|--|-----|----------|---------------------|---|----------------|
| | | | | <i>Beta</i> | <i>p-value</i> |
| Secondary education | 545 | Logistic | Odds ratio | 2.25 | < 0.001 |
| Postsecondary education | 611 | Logistic | Odds ratio | 2.81 | < 0.001 |
| Assets | 578 | Logistic | Odds ratio | 2.55 | < 0.001 |
| Economic hardship | 605 | Poisson | Relative risk ratio | 0.69 | < 0.001 |
| Homelessness | 611 | Logistic | Odds ratio | 0.42 | < 0.001 |
| Receipt of need-based public aid | 602 | Logistic | Odds ratio | 0.53 | 0.004 |
| Criminal justice system involvement | 576 | Logistic | Odds ratio | 0.48 | 0.016 |

Not Statistically Significant

- No statistically significant associations ($p < .05$) found between time in care past the 18th birthday and...
 - Employment and earnings; food insecurity; general health, mental health disorders, and substance use disorders; social support; pregnancy and parenting; arrests; and physical victimization.
- No harm associated with remaining in care

Limitations

- **Limitations**
 1. Generalizability to other states
 2. Sample loss over time
 3. Measures of preexisting differences
 4. Temporal relationship
 5. Outcomes of interest

Summary

- Staying in care is associated with a range of important benefits for young people.
- Amount of time in care past age 18 was associated with the expected likelihood of:
 - Increases in completing high school, enrolling in college, and access to financial assets
 - Decreases in economic hardship, homelessness, reliance on need-based public aid, and criminal conviction
- No evidence that remaining in care increased risk of poor outcomes.
- Time in care past age 18 was not significantly associated with some outcomes that were assessed.

Implications

- **Basic Needs**
 - Extended foster care may help youth meet their basic needs
- **Economic Well-being and Hardships**
 - Reduced hardships and increased assets affected by ability to pay for housing, food, and other necessities
- **Education**
 - Having basic needs met allows youth stay in school or attend college
- **Criminal Conviction**
 - Advocacy by professionals might be the link between extended care and lower conviction rate
 - Support from professionals may also influence other outcomes

Future Research

- Why are only some outcomes influenced?
- Will benefits be sustained? Will new ones emerge?
- What mechanisms of EFC assist youth transition to adulthood?
 - The importance of meeting youth's basic needs in adulthood?
 - Receipt of help from professionals and/or access other services as a consequence of remaining in care?

Memo

- **Issue Brief**

- Courtney, M. E., & Okpych, N. J. (2017). *Memo from CalYOUTH: Early findings on the relationship between extended foster care and youths' outcomes at age 19*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

- **Download**

- http://www.chapinhall.org/sites/default/files/CY_EF_IB0317.pdf

Stay tuned!

- CalYOUTH report on outcomes at age 21 for youth panel study participants: June 2018
- Issue briefs:
 - Homelessness among youth transitioning to adulthood from foster care
 - The role of extended foster care in college entry and persistence
 - Youth and caseworker views on youth's educational readiness, and college match
 - Update on the relationship between the implementation of extended foster care and legal permanency
 - Living arrangements and social support in the era of extended foster care